



Diane N. Tradd
Assistant City Manager/Director

R. Eric Slagle
Director

Shaun Shanahan
Building Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman William Bailey and Members of the Lowell Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Joseph Giniewicz, Associate Planner

Division of Development Services

CC: R. Eric Slagle, Director
Shaun Shanahan, Building Commissioner
Shawn Machado, Board Enforcement Agent
Judy Tymon, Senior Planner
Christine McCall, Assistant Planner
Mark Conserva (Representative for Applicant)

DATE: August 8, 2016

RE: 79 Branch St.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant has filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals to request a Special Permit for the installation of three internally illuminated signs for the property. The Board may recall that the site recently had a new building constructed which allowed the existing business, Ramos Liquors to remain at the location.

DECISION CRITERIA

The Board shall grant a Special permit only upon its written determination that the adverse affects of the proposed use and structure do not outweigh its beneficial impacts to the city or the neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and the proposal in relation to that site, and find that the following criteria have been adequately addressed:

1. Social, economic, or community needs which are served by the proposal;
2. Traffic flow and safety, including parking and loading;
3. Adequacy of utilities and other public services;
4. Neighborhood Character and social structures;
5. Impacts on the natural environment; and
6. Potential fiscal impact, including impact on city services, tax base, and employment.

PROJECT COMMENTS

Development Services has reviewed the proposal and have the following comments:

1. The proposal features 3 proposed signs, including 2 wall signs and one projecting sign. The projecting sign is to be located on the Branch St. side, with the two wall signs featured on

the Queen St. and cemetery sides of the building. Development Services would not support the sign located on the cemetery side of the property. The projecting sign that is to be located on the Branch St. side of the building should be adequate to advertise the business for individuals travelling from west of the property. Additionally, advertisements are generally inappropriate to locate adjacent to a use such as a cemetery.

2. The Board may wish to consider implementing restrictions upon posting signage on the side of the building. There have been a number of instances throughout the City where businesses have put product signs along the side of the building and/or block windows into the building. The Master Plan has outlined the following:

“Improve the appearance of business signage through the update of the existing sign code, expanded support of the Sign and Façade program citywide, and the strengthening of code enforcement efforts. “ (pg. 9)

As such, Development Services would urge the Board to consider furthering this objective by prohibiting the allowance of such types of signage.